



Problem Gambling among Drug and DUI Court Clients in GA

Research has demonstrated that PG is associated with participation in criminal acts (McCorkle, 2002; Meyer & Stadler, 1999), involvement in the criminal justice system (NORC, 1999), and substance and alcohol abuse (Petry, Stinson, & Grant, 2005). The current study assessed the prevalence and correlates of PG within a population in which these risk factors are compounded: Adults mandated to participate in drug and DUI courts due to criminal activity fueled by substance abuse. Limited resources devoted to the prevention and treatment of PG highlight the need to increase efforts to identify high risk populations which can be targeted for interventions, thus limiting potential harm and costs associated with PG. This study assessed PG among over 600 clients from 18 different Drug and DUI courts in GA, which collectively serve all types of GA counties (urban, urbanizing, suburban, rural growth, and rural decline). Furthermore, the sample was diverse in age, gender and ethnicity. Thus, the sample should be fairly representative of all Georgia drug/DUI court clients.

Prevalence of PG*

Of the 602 participants 52% (n = 313) had some problem gambling:

- 20.1% Pathological Gambler [PAG] (n = 121)
- 10.3% Problem Gambler [PG] (n = 62)
- 21.6% At-risk (or some problem) (n = 130)
- 48.0% Does not gamble or no problem (n = 289)

Odds of PG by Grouping Variable (after statistically controlling for demographic variables)

Variable	At-risk	PG	PAG
Odds Ratio			
Male vs. Female	1.9**	3.2**	2.9**
Black vs. Other	NS	1.9**	3.2**
Drug vs. DUI Court	2.1**	NS	8.9**
Parent w/PG	1.6**	2.9**	5.5**
Gamble < 18 years	1.9**	2.8**	5.3**
Gamble in corrections	3.1**	8.7**	11.3**
Gambling related crime	3.9**	9.0**	33.2**

*PG severity assessed via SOGS score: Categorical: score of 0 = non-gambler or no problem; 1-2 = At-risk; 3-4 = PG; 5+ = PAG; Continuous: 0 – 20; higher scores indicating increased PG severity

Committing Gambling-Related Crime reported by 33% (n=199) of respondents, of which only 14.6% were assessed as having no gambling problem. On average these participants reported committing 5.7 different types of gambling-related crimes, for example:

Gambling-related crimes committed	% reported	Gambling-related crimes committed	% reported
Sold or traded drugs	69%	Stolen from work	28%
Hustled cards, dice or other game	57%	Used another's credit/bank cards illegally	24%
Shoplifted	35%	Engaged in prostitution/pimping	22%
Bought, sold or held stolen property	34%	Hurt/threatened another	22%
Breaking and entering to steal	29%	Identity Theft	17%



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Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug use (ATOD) and Gambling

- 54.5% (n=328) have gambled drunk or high
- 29.6% (n= 178) reported elevated levels of drinking while gambling
- 27.1% (n= 163) reported elevated levels of drug use while gambling
- 36.2% (n= 218) reported elevated levels of smoking while gambling

After statistically controlling for demographic variables, increased drinking, drug use and smoking during gambling activities explained 17% of the variance in PG severity.

The association between gambling, substance abuse and crime: A qualitative snapshot

The relation between these variables is complex, and there appear to be multiple ways in which these associations manifest. These findings are consistent with the pathway model which identifies three different types of PGs. See Blaszczynski (2000) for further information and implications for treatment.

Gambling and substance abuse:

- “The only time I went gambling was when I was geeked up on meth”
- “I used [drugs] so that I could gamble longer”

Switching addictions

- “Gambling on lottery was my obsession until crack cocaine took over the picture 5 years ago”
- “I had never been into gambling...since I have been in recovery I like it and play a lot more”

Crime fueled by Gambling Addiction

- “I stole money and lottery tickets from the place I worked because of my gambling addiction”
- “I used money gained [illegally] to pay off a bookie”

Gambling, drug use, crime interrelated

- “Its just a bad circle of addiction the more you gamble the more you use drugs and the more you get addicted the deeper you go the harder to quit after a while you are willing to do whatever it takes to come up with the money to gamble more”

Recommendations to reduce the incidence/prevalence of PG among substance abusing offenders

- Screen for PG at intake into the CJS: We found that of those PG or PAG the Lie/Bet (Johnson, et al.1988) correctly identified 83% of participants as needing further assessment
- Incorporate PG interventions into drug/DUI court curriculum and into correctional settings
- Have clinicians working with drug and DUI court clients trained in the treatment of PG
- Visit the GSU Problem Gambling Research team web site for further information about PG, clinical training events, preventative and treatment interventions, and for other technical assistance.

www.GeorgiaGamblingHelp.org

For additional help or technical assistance contact Jennifer Zorland at psyj1z@langate.gsu.edu

LIE-BET TOOL TO RULE OUT PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING

This 2-item measure has been found to be reliable and valid at discriminating between pathological and non-problem gamblers. A response of “Yes” to either question indicates further assessment is warranted.

- 1) **Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?**
- 2) **Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?**

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